

EBALIA TUBERCULOSA (OXYSTOMATA:LEUCOSIIDAE); TWO FURTHER RECORDS FOR NEW ZEALAND WATERS

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Abstract. The recovery of two specimens of *Ebalia tuberculosa* (A. Milne-Edwards), from coastal trawl samples, is recorded.

Ebalia tuberculosa (A. Milne-Edwards) has been provisionally recorded in recent checklists of New Zealand Brachyura (Bennett 1964, p. 22; Dell 1968, p.22) based on its collection in these waters during the Challenger Expedition (Miers 1886, pp. 306-7; pl. 25, fig. 1). A record, by Chilton (1906, p. 266), has been dismissed by Bennett (1964, p. 22).

The discovery of a single female specimen owes its origin to the somewhat fortuitous collection of the very rare Ogocephalid *Halieutaea maoria* (Powell) by an Auckland trawlerman, Mr. F. Yukich, in 60 - 80 fathoms (109.7 - 146.3 m) off the Aldermen Islands (26.iv.1967). This fish was subsequently offered to the Museum as an additional record.

Prior to preservation, I took the opportunity to examine stomach and gut content. The content was remarkable for its homogeneity of Ebalids, yielding five specimens of *Ebalia laevis* (Bell) and one *E. tuberculosa* (A. Milne-Edwards). All specimens were more or less undamaged, and digestive enzymes did not appear to have reduced features of diagnostic importance.

This female specimen of *Ebalia tuberculosa* (Fig. 1) generally agrees with the description and figure published by Hale (1927, p. 197; fig. 198). Carapace protuberances are less prominent, a feature noted for most New Zealand specimens examined by Miers (1886), and in Australian females by Whitelegge (1900, p. 161) and Rathbun (1923, p. 134; pl. 35, figs. 1-2). Posterior lobes are almost obsolete, a characteristic also recorded in previously collected New Zealand specimens by Miers. The carapace length is 7.6 mm and width 7.5 mm (c.f. Rathbun 1923, length of female E 5160 was 7.8 mm and width 7.7 mm). Overall body colour prior to preservation was pale cream. The tubercles were tinted orange, and there were pale orange blotchings over the frontal region and legs.

During recent prawn trials carried out aboard the trawler *Valkyrie*, a selection of benthic organisms were collected by Mr. C. Wormald, and distributed to various workers for identification and inclusion in reference collections. Subsequently, I have been given the opportunity to examine and report on a small male ebalid collected in 180-240 fathoms (329.2 - 438.9 m) east of the Poor Knights Islands (May 1969) which has also proved to be *E. tuberculosa*.

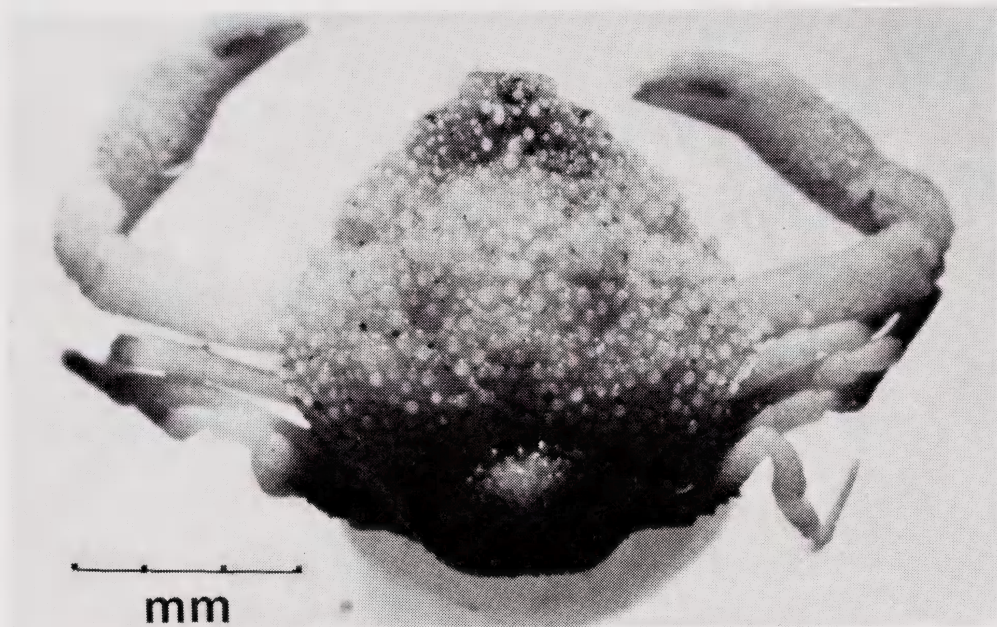


Fig. 1. *Ebalia tuberculosa*. Dorsal view, female.

In comparing it with the above female specimen, the branchial protuberances and posterior lobes appear relatively more prominent, as noted by previous workers. Carapace length (5.0 mm) is equidistant to width. Colour following alcohol preservation is pale cream.

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